How Climate Change Affects Wildlife

How Climate Change Affects Wildlife: Global Impacts on Animal Survival

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Introduction

Climate change is no longer a distant environmental threat—it's a pressing reality with profound effects on biodiversity. One of the most concerning outcomes is the way it affects wildlife across different continents. From shrinking polar bear habitats to altered frog breeding cycles, climate change touches nearly every species on Earth.

In this post, we examine how climate change affects wildlife, including changes in behavior, migration, reproduction, and survival. Drawing from scientific analysis, this in-depth look will benefit students, researchers, educators, and environmentally-conscious readers.

This excerpt from a Zoology thesis provides crucial insight into real-world impacts, highlighting why understanding these changes is vital for conservation efforts.

Article

> ***CHAPTER-VII: ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS ON***

ANIMALS

"Climate change and other environmental changes are altering key habitat elements that are critical to wildlife's survival and putting natural resources in jeopardy.

Wildlife depends on healthy habitats. They need:
· The right temperatures
· Fresh water
· Food sources
· Places to raise their young

Temperature

· Melting arctic ice removes hunting ground from Polar Bears.
· Warmer water temperatures will cause population declines for trout, salmon and many other species that require cold water to survive.
· Rising ocean temperatures have already caused massive coral bleaching, leading to the collapse of these ecosystems which sustain huge numbers of fish.

Water

· Larger floods are expected to increase erosion levels, reducing water quality and degrading aquatic habitat.
· Severe droughts stress and can kill plants on which wildlife depend for food and shelter, and deprives wildlife of water sources.

Food

· Climate change has altered food availability for migratory species; birds arrive on schedule to find their food sources—insects, seeds, flowering plants—have hatched or bloomed too early or not at all.
· Milder winters cause seasonal food caches to spoil, so wildlife species like the Gray Jay depending on food stores to survive the winter are left without sustenance.

Places to Raise Young

· Droughts caused by global warming could dry up 90 percent of central U.S. wetlands, eliminating essential breeding habitat for ducks, geese and other migratory species.
· Rising sea level and changes in salinity could decimate mangrove forests, leaving many fish, shellfish, and other wildlife without a place to breed, feed or raise offspring.

Often overlooked, just as important as the many ways in which our climate is changing, is that it is changing so fast and thus the need to address global warming. Species may not be able to adapt to this rapid climate change or to move fast enough to more suitable areas as their current areas become less suitable for them. Unless significant action is taken now, global warming will likely become the single most important factor to affect wildlife since the emergence of mankind.

Climate Change – Effects on Animals, Birdlife and Plants

Our climate is changing, both naturally and due to human exploitation. There is already undeniable evidence that animals, birds and plants are being affected by climate change and global warming in both their distribution and behavior. Unless greenhouse gas emissions are severely reduced, climate change could cause a quarter of land animals, birdlife and plants to become extinct.

Climate variability and change affects birdlife and animals in a number of ways; birds lay eggs earlier in the year than usual, plants bloom earlier and mammals are come out of hibernation sooner. Distribution of animals is also affected; with many species moving closer to the poles as a response to the rise in global temperatures. Birds are migrating and arriving at their nesting grounds earlier, and the nesting grounds that they are moving to are not as far away as they used to be and in some countries the birds don't even leave anymore, as the climate is suitable all year round.

A sea level rise of only 50cm could cause sea turtles to lose their nesting beaches – over 30% of Caribbean beaches are used by turtles during the nesting season and would be affected. The already endangered Mediterranean Monk Seals need beaches upon which to raise their pups and a rise in sea level could there could damage shallow coastal areas

used annually by whales and dolphins which need shallow, gentle waters in order to rear there small calves.

Humans have already destroyed many of the natural migrations of animals.

The migratory journeys of Wildebeest in several African countries are stopped by fences. Changing rainfall patterns are causing dams to be erected in some areas of our planet, not taking into account the migratory fish and mammals that annually migrate up river to breed and spawn and water birds which rely on wetland sites for migration are at threat from rising sea levels caused by human effects.

The atmosphere is sucking moisture from the land at a greater rate than ever before causing severe droughts in many countries which are now facing reduced crop production and major drinking water shortages.

Although it is thought that no species has yet become extinct exclusively because of climate change, many migratory and non-migratory species are expected to become extinct in the near future."

—Excerpt from the Thesis of Pratima Kumari, S

🟠 Image Prompt (For AI Tools)

"Create a detailed scientific illustration of climate change effects on wildlife, focusing on habitat loss and animal migration disruptions in a realistic academic style."

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